



Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE *109th* CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2005

Senate

Creation of a National Park in Delaware

Mr. **CARPER**. Mr. President, some folks were looking for a place to go on summer vacation on the Internet. A lot of people go to national parks. A couple of summers ago, my family and I went to Alaska and visited Denali, a national park bigger than my State. We had a wonderful time in Alaska. But if you go to the national park Web site, you can find national parks to visit in 49 States. There is one State that has no national park. It is my State.

I am reintroducing legislation Senator **BIDEN** and I introduced at the end of the last Congress. We will reintroduce that so we get our State on the road to having our own national park and providing people around the country and the world the opportunity to learn about our coastal heritage, which included the landing of the first Swedes and Finns when they came to America. They landed in Wilmington, DE, to establish the colony of New Sweden. I don't think the Finns called it that, but the Swedes did. We want to have a national park of our own that would include that discovery, commemorate that discovery.

Our bill authorizes the National Park Service to conduct a Special Resource Study of Delaware's coastal region. This study is the first step toward establishing the first national park in Delaware.

Delaware's coastal region is rich in historical sites, parks, and wildlife areas. This Special Resource Study will trace the various threads that make up the fabric of Delaware, which are an ideal microcosm for the tapestry of America. Together, these sites highlight the threads of history, heritage, commerce, and nature. The result would be a national park highlighting America's history, cultural heritage, commercial progress and natural beauty.

The study would be anchored on Fort Christina and the 7th Street Peninsula in Wilmington. It would extend south from there to include old New Castle and points along Delaware's coast in Kent and Sussex Counties, which have been the location of many significant events throughout America's history.

This proposed study will help encapsulate the human and natural

activity that has occurred along our coast that has helped create the very fabric of our society.

I am confident this study will prove that a national park highlighting Delaware's rich coastal heritage would be a very appropriate and fitting addition to the National Park system. Our national park would demonstrate that coastal regions like those found in Delaware are a vital part of America's past, present, and future.

Delaware is first in so many ways, but it is the only state without a national park. Every year, millions of Americans plan their vacations around our nation's national park system. They log onto the Park Service web site and search for ideas for their family vacations. Right now, that search will turn up nothing for

Delaware. With a national park unit here in Delaware, that will change.

In the future, those families will be considering a trip to Delaware to visit our national park. Those trips will be a significant boost to our economy and will teach new generations of Americans about Delaware's rich cultural heritage.

I have described to you today a vision resulting from the hard work of many dedicated Delawareans. Today, I take the next step in making their vision a reality.

I believe this is an exciting proposal and one that, when incorporated into the National Park System, will become an important element in preserving the wonderful human and natural history presented by our coastal region.